

Family Programming Using the Smithsonian Institution's *Talk with Me Toolkits*

11th Family Place Libraries™ Symposium

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Family Place Libraries
Building Foundations for Early Learning



Smithsonian
Office of Educational Technology


Goodling
for Research
in Family Literacy
Institute



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part by a grant from the
Institute of Museum and Library Services



Agenda

- Introductions
 - Overview of the project
 - Talk With Me Toolkits (TMT)
 - Evaluation findings of the TMT
 - Review of TMT
 - Strategies for using the TMT
 - Questions
- 

Introductions



Dr. Carol Clymer
Co-Director
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Dr. Elisabeth McLean
Assistant Teaching
Professor
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Project Team

Family Place Libraries

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- Tracy LaStella
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- Caroline Mandaro

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- Philippa Rappoport

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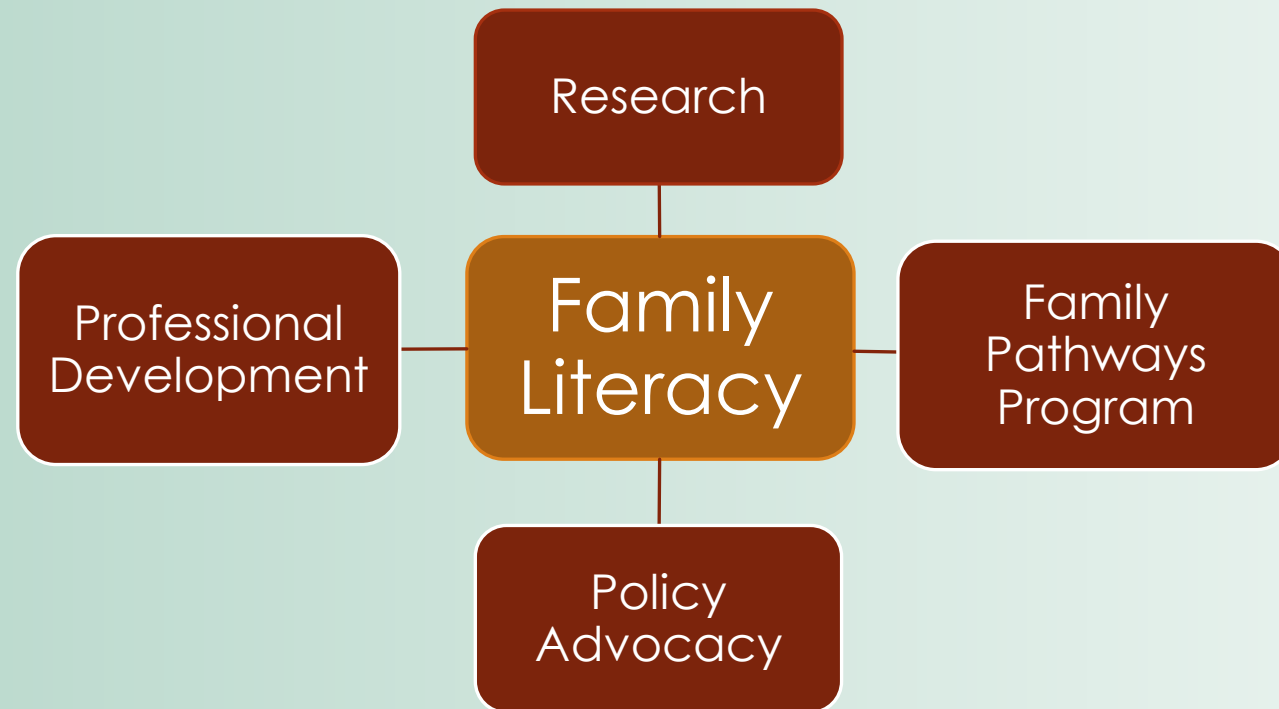
- Carol Clymer
- Beth McLean
- Esther Prins
- Heather Toomey Zimmerman
- Mai Atta
- Ping Xu



Smithsonian Office of Educational Technology (OET)

- **The Smithsonian Institution** is the largest museum system in the world with 21 museums and multiple research centers, established to increase and diffuse knowledge.
- **The Office of Educational Technology's purpose** is to bridge the digital educational resources created and curated by SI educators with the larger PK12 educational community.
- One vehicle for sharing our digital educational assets is through the **Smithsonian Learning Lab**; an interactive digital platform launched in 2016, where users can discover, create, and share resources and collections of content with over 6 million resources to choose from.

Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy



<https://ed.psu.edu/research-grants/centers-institutes/goodling-institute>

IMLS Grant - What We Did

- Adapted and evaluated Smithsonian OET's free, online *Talk with Me Toolkits* for library engagement and family literacy efforts
 - Learned what caregivers liked and did not like
 - Received input from librarians about how to use TMTs
- Supported caregivers' use of TMTs to foster reading, writing, questioning, talking, and other literacy outcomes with and for their children



Talk with Me Toolkit

Objectives

- ▶ To foster and strengthen discussion between caregivers and children to promote children's language and literacy development.
- ▶ To introduce caregivers and children to an array of artifacts from the Smithsonian that includes captivating videos, real-world photographs, intriguing paintings, and other artworks.



Talk with Me Toolkit

Format

Each TMT includes:

- Title page
- How to use the TMT – information about icons and how to proceed through the TMT
- Look or watch – images and videos with vocabulary and question prompts
- Play – activities that include instructions and a list of supplies related to the activities
- Read together – 3 books related to the topic with question prompts
- Additional activities and books – related to the TMT topic to promote further reading and conversation about the topic



IMLS Grant – Evaluation Tasks

- Evaluation included 2 cohorts of families
- Evaluation focused on
 - Understanding if the TMTs improved literacy behaviors
 - Learning how to adapt the TMTs to help libraries support caregiver engagement in literacy practices
- Evaluation and use of TMTs occurred in 4 libraries
 - Cuyahoga County Public Library, Brooklyn Branch, Cleveland OH
 - Hillsboro City Library, Hillsboro TX
 - Middle Country Public Library, Centereach NY
 - York County Libraries, Martin Library, York PA



IMLS Grant – Data Collected

- Caregiver pre- and post-survey
- Observation of the first and last TMT session
- Caregiver satisfaction survey with each TMT
- Librarian satisfaction survey with each TMT
- Caregiver focus group
- Librarian focus group and interviews



Quantitative Findings

Pre/Post Survey Comparison

After participating in the project:

➤ Cohort #1 significant increase in:

- Reading to children more frequently and for longer duration
- Engaged more frequently in family discussion during reading sessions

➤ Cohort #2 significant increase in:

- Activities where caregivers and children engage in literacy practices, such as writing alphabets, words
- Engaged in more frequent discussions together about the stories and topics they read together after completing a story.



Quantitative Findings

Pre/Post Survey Comparison

Cohort #1 and Cohort #2 comparison of pre- and post-survey

- Significant increase in the frequency of:
 - Caregivers reading to children
 - Doing art activities together
 - Interactive reading behaviors, such as stopping to ask children questions or children making comments and asking questions while reading.



Qualitative Findings Overall

- Positive engagement with the TMTs, such as pointing at the slides, talking together, and asking questions.
 - “My child stayed interested and he was excited to come back every week.”
- Questions stimulated conversation and introduced new vocabulary.
- Caregivers enjoyed having the specific time set aside to interact with their children.
- TMTs covered six topics, but interest in a particular TMT often depended on the curiosity of the child about that topic.



Qualitative Findings Caregiver Views

- ▶ Questions on the slides stimulated conversations
 - “So, it helped me because I don't know what type of questions to ask.”
- ▶ New vocabulary words learned
 - The TMT “expanded our vocabulary for words that my wife and I don't normally use, so we had to learn.”



Qualitative Findings Caregiver Views

- New topics and subjects introduced
 - “It was a good learning experience. There were a few things that I didn't know, so it was learning for myself as well as my son.”
 - “I think in each one that we did, there was something different that I wouldn't have personally taught my son, so that was cool. And like he said, stuff that I didn't know, vocabulary terms, I wouldn't have known how to explain videos, I wouldn't have known to show him.”



Qualitative Findings

Librarian Views

Librarians:

- Liked addition of vocabulary words from cohort #1 to cohort #2
- Found using a lesson plan for each TMT was helpful (e.g., time spent on a section of slides)
- Made handouts of the questions and vocabulary words, which helped families during the session



Qualitative Findings

Librarian Views

Librarians:

- Mentioned that families like the TMTs because they “really enjoy just talking together and learning together.”
- Thought that, although the slides and videos were fun, most children liked the activities best. “I definitely think probably the hands-on part was their favorite of all of it.”

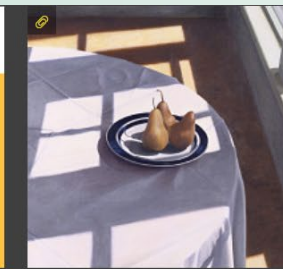
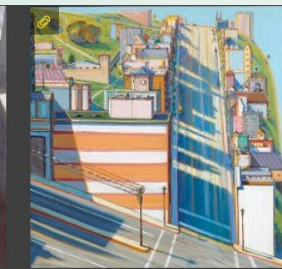


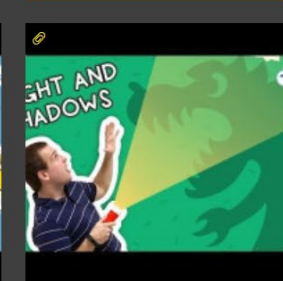
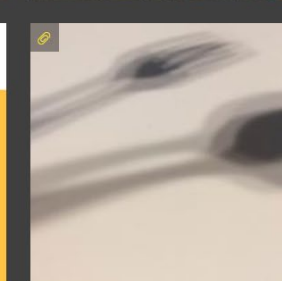
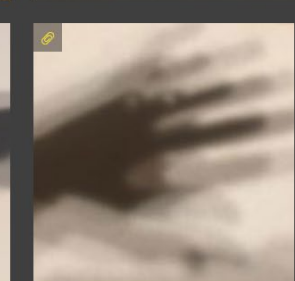

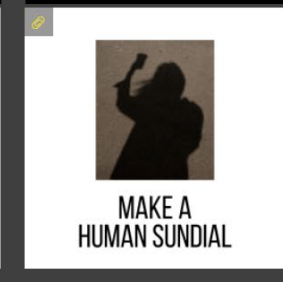
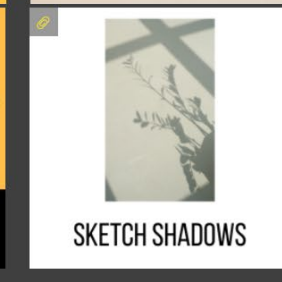
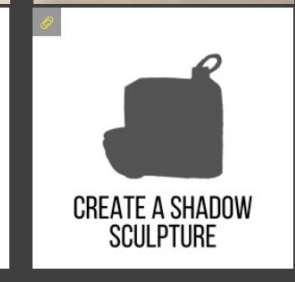
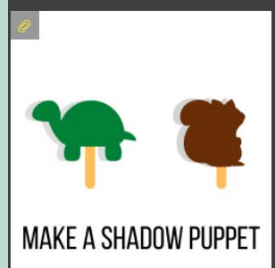
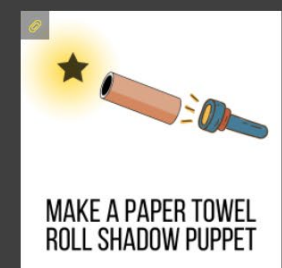





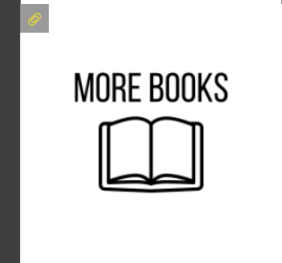

Let's take a look!



Talk with Me Toolkits (TMTs)

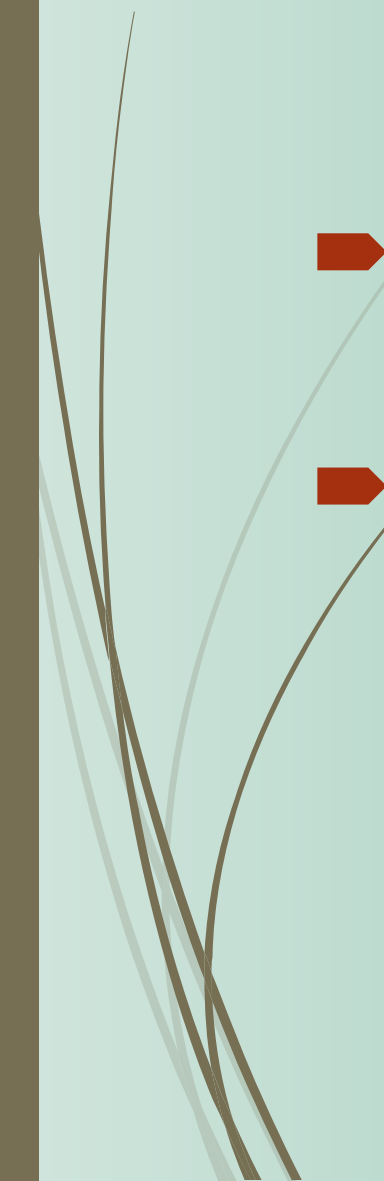
The TMTs can be found at: <https://learninglab.si.edu/org/talk-with-me-toolkits>, or individually:

- *Air & Space: Can It Fly?* - <https://s.si.edu/tmt-fly>
- *Art: Colors, Shapes, and Lines* - <https://s.si.edu/tmt-colors>
- *Art: Light and Shadow* - <https://s.si.edu/tmt-shadow>
- *Me & My world: My Neighborhood* - <https://s.si.edu/tmt-neighborhood>
- *Music: Animal Tracks* - <https://s.si.edu/tmt-tracks>
- *Nature: Who Lives in the Soil?* - <https://s.si.edu/tmt-soil>

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| <p>ART</p> <p>LIGHT</p> <p>&</p> <p>SHADOWS</p> <p>ART: Light and Shadow Talk With Me Toolkit</p> | <p>HOW TO USE</p> <p>Each image on this page is a resource. Click a resource to view it in detail. As you view each resource, use these buttons to interact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Click the Paperclip button to close or open activity information. Closing this information will make an image or video larger. Click the Info button to learn more about the resource (who made it or where it came from). Click the Zoom button to make an image larger. Click the Arrow buttons in the bottom navigation bar to move forward and backward in the toolkit. Click the Grid button in the bottom navigation bar to go back to the full toolkit. | <p>L O O K</p> <p>FIND THE LIGHT AND SHADOWS</p> |  |  |  |
| <p>WATCH:</p> <p>SOURCES OF LIGHT</p> | <p>LIGHT SOURCES</p>  | <p>LIGHT AND SHADOWS</p>  | <p>L O O K</p> <p>FIND THE SHADOWS</p> |  |  |
| <p>PLAY AND EXPLORE</p> <p>SHADOWS</p> <p>Play and Explore: Shadows Talk With Me Toolkit</p> | <p>PLAY WITH A FLASHLIGHT</p>  | <p>MAKE A HUMAN SUNDIAL</p>  | <p>PLAY</p> <p>MAKE ART WITH LIGHT & SHADOWS</p> | <p>SKETCH SHADOWS</p>  | <p>CREATE A SHADOW SCULPTURE</p>  |
| <p>MAKE A SHADOW PUPPET</p>  | <p>MAKE A PAPER TOWEL ROLL SHADOW PUPPET</p>  | <p>CREATE RAINBOW SUNCATCHER ART</p>  | <p>PLAY WITH LIGHT, BLOCKS, AND SHADOWS</p>  | <p>READ TOGETHER</p> <p>MOONBEAR'S SHADOW</p> <p>• FRANK ASCH •</p>  | <p>READ TOGETHER</p> <p>SHADOW CHASERS</p>  |
| <p>READ TOGETHER</p> <p>SMOOT: A REBELLIOUS SHADOW</p>  | <p>MORE BOOKS</p>  | <p>MORE ACTIVITIES</p>  | <p>Art: Light and Shadow - https://s.si.edu/tmt-shadow</p> | | |



Discussion: Using the TMTs in Library Programming

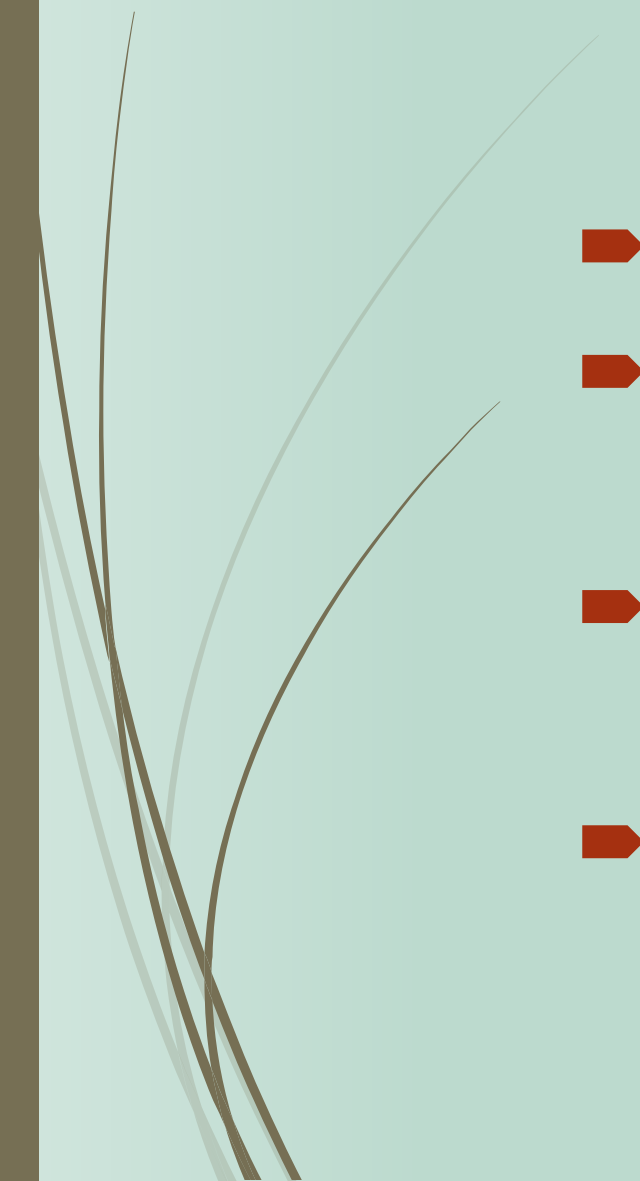
- Introduce yourself and describe your family engagement programming.
 - How would your library use the TMTs in your programming?
 - Would you build a specific program around the TMTs or use them in an existing program?
 - What other types of programs would the TMT fit into?
- 



More ideas for
using the TMTs



Manual

- Background
 - *Talk with Me Toolkits* description and contents
 - Tips for setting up and implementing the TMT session
 - Encouraging use of the TMT at home
- 

Implementation Strategies

Talk with Me Toolkit Session

- Develop a session plan/lesson plan for presenting the TMT
- Determine the number of slides, videos, activities, and books you will present to families. Typically, the slides, videos, 1 to 2 activities, and a book take 1.5 hours.
- Decide if each dyad receives a device or if you present as a group
- Most appropriate for the age group of 5- to 8-years of age. Can be adapted for other age groups



Implementation Strategies

Talk with Me Toolkit Session

- Print out questions and vocabulary words for conversation between slides
- Encourage conversation and discussion of vocabulary
- Model how to ask questions to further conversation (e.g., open ended questions)
- Let caregivers know that the questions and prompts are meant as a springboard for conversation and encourage them to expand on the topic



Implementation Strategies

Talk with Me Toolkit Activities

- Decide on the activity or activities you want caregivers and children to do together and have the supplies on hand
- Develop new activities you think families might enjoy that are related to the TMT topic



Implementation Strategies

Talk with Me Toolkit Book Reading

- Choose a book from the three provided that is appropriate for the age-group attending your session
- Additional books are listed at the end of each TMT
- Read the book with the children modeling interactive reading
- If possible, allow opportunities for caregivers to check out the books



Encourage Use of Toolkit at Home

- Inform caregivers that TMTs are available online for use at home.
 - Provide a QR code or links to the TMTs
- Encourage families to complete additional activities at home
 - Provide take-home bags with supplies and activity instructions for families to complete at home.

More discussion for using the Toolkits in your family programming

What age group can you use the TMTs with?

How would you encourage families to use the TMTs at home?

What other ideas do you have for using the TMTs?



THANK YOU!

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